

## The World Wireless Beacon

Newsletter of the  
**Society of Wireless Pioneers, Inc.,**  
 P.O. Box 86, Geyserville, CA 95441 - 0086 USA

Vol. 11 No. 3

September 1999

### END OF MORSE AT KPH

by

**Dick Dillman, W6AWO**

Chief Operator at K6KPH of the Maritime Radio Historical Society Collector Of Heavy Metal: Harleys, Willys and Radios Over 100lbs.

Printed with permission

**The end came yesterday.** We knew it had to come. But the end had been predicted so many times for so many years while Morse soldiered on, paying no attention, providing good, reliable service for decades after it was declared dead... maybe some of thought the day would never come. But when KPH/KFS signed off the air for the last time yesterday it was the end of commercial Morse in North America.

It was a sad day but one I knew I couldn't miss.

Tom Horsfall, WA6OPE and I were invited along with many others to be present at the Half Moon Bay master station of Globe Wireless from which the final messages would be sent. I held in my hand two messages I hoped to have transmitted. They were messages of greeting and farewell from the Maritime Radio Historical Society and the San Francisco Maritime Historical Park -typed of course with a mill on

historically correct Mackay Radio radiogram blanks. I secretly dared hope that I myself might be permitted to send these messages. I brought along my favorite straight key in its carrying case and my radiotelegraph license just in case.

I have visited KFS many times over the years. On my first visit the operating room had nothing but Morse positions. Over the years the number of computers steadily advanced as the Morse positions retreated to the west end of the building. When we walked in yesterday both sides of the operating room were lined with racks holding sleek black computers and monitors. And way down at the end was the one remaining Morse operating position.

Tom spotted him first... Paul Zell, the morse operator on duty. We knew him by his green eyeshade. All real radiotelegraph operators seem to wear green eyeshades. Pictures I have taken at KFS and KPH decades ago show men in green eyeshades at the key or the Kleinschmidt. Pictures taken at those stations decades before that show the same thing. I am convinced that there is a secret ceremony of the green eyeshade in which the distinctive headgear is carefully placed upon the head of the operator newly welcomed

into the fraternity. This is of course a ceremony we have not been permitted to witness, a ceremony that will never again take place.

I sat down next to Paul Zell as we listened to Russian and Cuban ships calling their respective coast stations. I realized that true to its nature, Morse will carry on in other parts of the world even after the keyes in North America are finally silent. I had to ask Paul the question... "How are you feeling about today?" An impossible question to answer but he answered it. "CW was my life," he said and turned back to the receiver.

More people started to arrive, a surprising number of reporters among them. But the real dignitaries in my eyes were the radio men and women who knew they had to be there on this day. Jack Martini, manager of KPH when it shut down (he intentionally left the receivers on when he left). Ray Smith, the operator who sent the farewell message when KPH at Bolinas/Pt. Reyes shut down. John Brundage, manager of KFS in its golden age of Morse. Denise, the first female coast station operator on the west coast. Rex Patterson, chief engineer at KFS in its glory

(continued next page)



## END OF MORSE AT KPH

From Page 1

years. And many more. We swapped stories and I showed them my photo album. We ate from the delicious spread of food provided by Peter Kierans of Globe Wireless. But our eyes kept glancing at the clock. It was now less than two hours to the end.

I finally screwed my courage to the sticking place and asked Tim Gorman, Director of Operations, if my messages might be sent and if, perhaps, I might be permitted to send them. Tim had met me only that day. I might be a fumble-fisted lid for all he knew. And he was busy with the press and with all the details of the ceremony. "We'll see...", he said. And that was enough for me.

Now the final transmissions from WCC/WNU began. We copied them off the air. The room fell silent. I noticed one man in particular. He was probably the oldest person there but had a presence that we used to call "spry". He had a quick laugh and twinkling eye. I watched him now. He stood leaning forward, eyes closed, as the sound washed over him.... drinking in... the Morse. He was a pioneer operator, the genuine article, no doubt about it. I wanted to meet him, to ask his name at least. But of course I couldn't possibly interrupt his reverie.

Paul Zell sent the first of the KFS/KPH sign off messages from the local position. Again we were all silent and when he finished... there was a round of applause! Applause for a radiotelegraph operator! Well deserved applause, deserved by every radiotelegraph operator everywhere, applause unheard for 80 years. Paul made a small, embarrassed nod of his head, accepting the tribute for himself and for all the operators on all the ships and at all the coast stations over the years.

Then he copied the last commercial message KFS would receive, from the Liberty ship Jeremiah O'Brien/KXCH on 500kc. The op on the O'Brien said he would standby until 15 past the hour. Zell replied "better make that 18 past, OM." The operator on the O'Brien understood and said that yes, he would observe the silent period - which of course is no longer required by regulation but is absolutely required by tradition. Then Paul said that he'd standby "on 600". The crowd got a big kick out of that - 600 meters instead of 500kc. Subtle, but all the more meaningful for that.

I saw Tim approaching me across the room. "Get your key...", he said. Get your key! Holy mackerel, they were going to let me do it! So I got out the key, gathered up my messages, and plugged in. But then I realized: the best Morse operators in the country... the best Morse operators in the world, probably... would be listening to every dot and dash I sent! They would be too polite to say anything if I flubbed it of course... but they and I and everyone else in the room and all the ships at sea would know! My palms started to sweat at that thought but there was no turning back now. I took Paul Zell's seat. I sent a couple of Vs to see if there was side tone in the 'phones. The knob on the key was loose! I tightened that up... and began to send.

I sent the first message from the Maritime Radio Historical Society and all went well. Then I signed the station calls.. "de KPH/KFS". Tom and a few others noticed that I sent KPH first and understood why. Then the second message from the San Francisco Maritime Historical Park. And the calls again... followed by my "sine"... and K. I had gotten through it! And there was a round of applause for me! Thoroughly undeserved but very much appreciated. Someone even said, "Nice fist". High

praise indeed in that crowd.

Then the final messages from KFS/KPH began. Paul Zell sent the first ones. Then Tim Gorman sat down and proved himself to be much more than just a competent manager. He sent the final message in meticulous Morse using the chrome-plated Vibroplex, signed off with "What hath God wrought"... then SK... and it was over.

There were wet eyes in that room, mine among them. I heard more than one tough-looking old timer mumble, "I didn't think it would get to me, but..." and then turn away.

I had one further item on my agenda: to get my license endorsed showing me as an operator at KFS/KPH on the last day of North American Morse. Once again Tim Gorman showed himself to be a gracious and understanding man as he took pen in hand to write "satisfactory" in the blank provided for operator evaluation on the back of the license and add his signature.

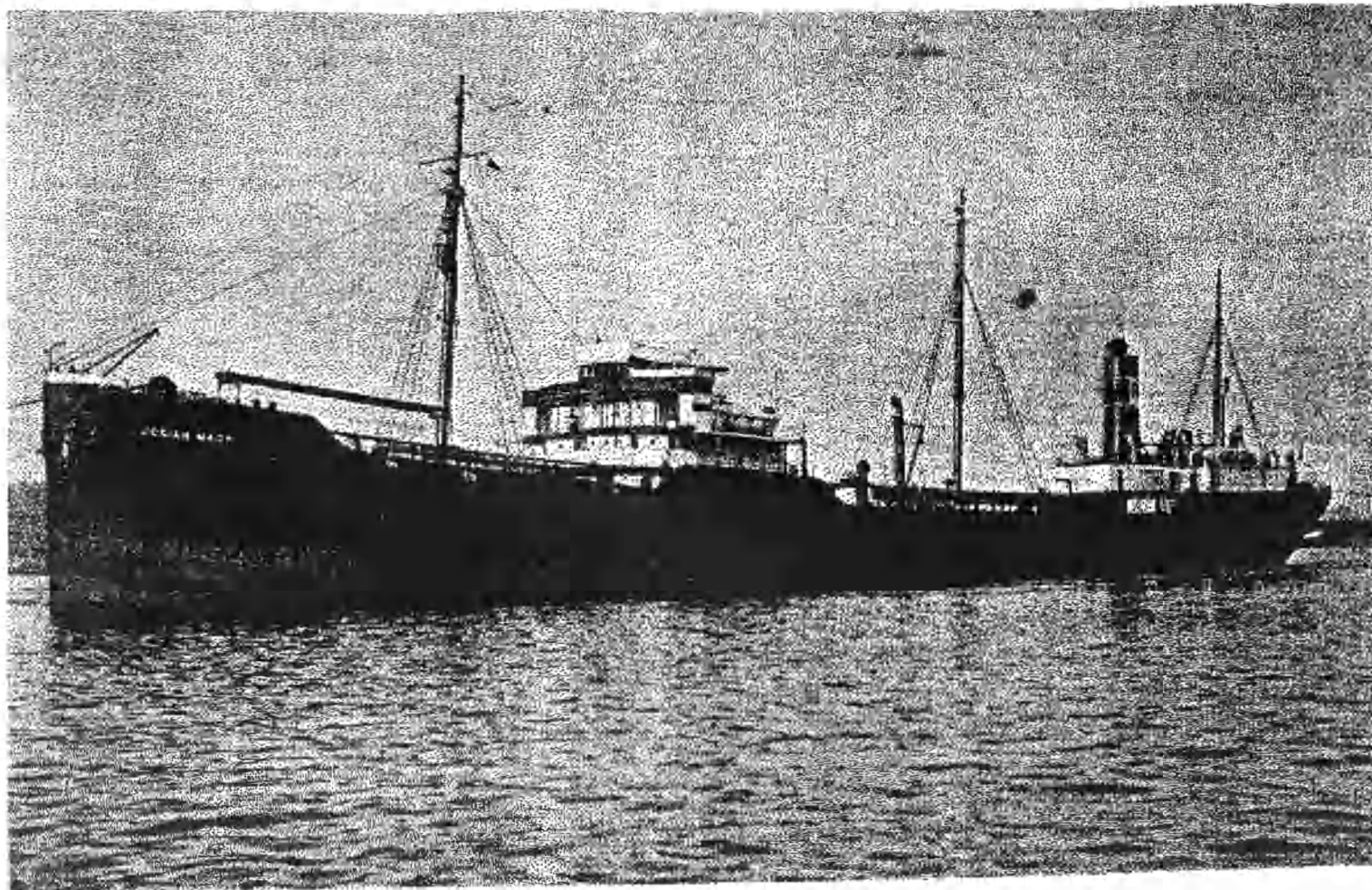
Finally it was time to go. I gathered up my key and my photos and my papers and shook hands once more with all the great men and women who were there. And finally we were heading north on highway 1 with the beautiful Pacific sunset on our left and the green coastal hills on the right. "That was one helluva day," Tom said. "Yep," I agreed.

Vy 73,

Dick/"RD"

---

Please see back page (Page 12) for copy by Ben Russell SOWP 1853 V, N6SL



**Motor Tanker "Josiah Macy"**

(photo provided by Peg McKinney)

## A VOYAGE TO FREETOWN

(Continued from June 1999 WWB)

Aboard SS Josiah Macy/HPFE

April 15, 1941:

By John McKinney

SOWP 1001-P, W0AP

I found the radio room still sealed off and to my knowledge no inspection of the seal was made by the port authority. Not that it mattered, for in reality I had full access to the room and its contents when this door from the passageway was sealed. As I mentioned before, my stateroom and the radio room were side by side across the rear

portion of the bridge deck. There was a narrow door connecting the two rooms that was out of sight behind the radio room door whenever the radio room door was fully opened. On earlier occasions when the radio room had been "sealed" no one had entered my stateroom. If they entered the radio room they would have found the door fully opened and hooked back against the bulkhead, concealing the presence of the second door. I never volunteered this information to the authorities as I found it most convenient to have access to the typewriter, stationery, tools etc. that were kept in the room.

After clearing the room of cameras and two or three personal radios, I began standing a listening watch, tested my

transmitters and checked the batteries, auto-alarm etc. for the trip back across the South Atlantic.

It was on the second night out of Freetown when I was awakened by a crew member shouting, "Get on the bridge, the mate needs help, there's someone blinking at us!" I jumped into a pair of trousers and hurried through the wheelhouse to the starboard wing of the bridge where the second mate was staring at a fast-blinking signal light off the starboard bow. By the time I reached for our blinker light key beneath the bridge rail, Captain Wing appeared in pajamas, bathrobe and slippers from his quarters on the deck

(continued next page)



## A VOYAGE TO FREETOWN

From Page 3

below. In the darkness it was difficult to make out the vessel that was signalling but from the intensity of the light source I knew instantly it had to be a naval vessel. I hit my key a few strokes and his dit-dah-dit-dah attention-getting rhythm stopped and he asked the usual question, "WHAT SHIP?" I relayed this to the Captain who replied, "WHO IN HELL WANTS TO KNOW?"

By this time it was apparent who wanted to know! Looming alongside a few hundred yards away was the most formidable naval vessel I had ever seen; at least from our vantage point. Standing some fifty feet above us with all her starboard side guns trained on us stood the newly launched British cruiser PRINCE OF WALES. (No, her name was not engraved on her hull and it was not until later that we found her identity). By this time I had exchanged the usual information via blinker which consisted of the name of our vessel "M/S JOSIAH MACY/HPFE bound Aruba from Freetown under ballast."

We had stopped engines as requested and waited for some reply from the cruiser. After what seemed like a long wait, but was probably only a few minutes, an officer on the bridge of the cruiser shouted to us through his bull-horn, "Sorry to have stopped you, Cheerio, be on your way," and the signalman sent me the ever familiar "OVG" (International signal code for Bon Voyage).

As I mentioned we did not know at the time the identity of the naval vessel that had stopped us but some time later I heard news reports that the newly constructed cruiser "Prince Of Wales" had slipped out Scotland, eluded the German U-Boat fleet and safely made

it to Australia where she joined the fighting against the Japanese.

This was the first of two successive incidents that took place on our return voyage to Aruba. Two days later I was in the radio room on watch at about 2 P.M. ship time when I heard a whine overhead followed by a deep "thud" and within seconds another of the same and a shout from the bridge, "Somebody's shooting at us, Captain."

Captain Wing, who, had been sunning himself on his deck below, could be seen bounding up the ladder to the bridge wing. There was a great commotion on deck below where several sailors were painting. The captain called through the speaking tube and told me to stand by for a possible distress. By now all three mates were on the bridge and I could hear the bells of the engine room telegraph ringing for someone to answer the telephone from the bridge. I could tell from the sun's shadows that we had suddenly altered course some 45 degrees to the south and heard the diesels pick up a bit more speed. No vessel had yet been sighted. It was one of those lazy, hazy days with quite limited visibility and the sea was quite calm with gently rolling swells and no white caps. The second mate reported seeing a flash off the starboard bow when the second shot was fired. It appeared to come from a low-lying object hardly visible through the mist. We conjectured later that we had probably surprised a German sub which was taking advantage of the poor visibility and calm sea to surface and charge batteries.

We never heard a third shot. By now I had fired up the Lorenz shortwave transmitter and had contact with WCC at Chatham, Massachusetts and told him to stand by for a possible distress and passed him our noon position, course and speed. We were all on pins

and needles for the remainder of that afternoon, but when we heard no more from the sub, the Captain had the mate resume course and posted extra look-outs for the night. I had explained the shelling to the operator at WCC who would check with me every fifteen minutes. When we resumed course and speed I so notified him and thanked him for his vigilance. I don't think anyone slept too well that night and most of the crew quartered below decks remained topside with their mattresses. Nothing further was heard from our surprise "visitor".

The remaining voyage to the Leeward Islands went without incident. On the 8th day I noticed that my call, HPFE, was appearing on the WCC traffic list. I took the message which diverted our ship from Aruba to Caripito, Venezuela, where we were to load crude for Buenos Aires.

As we passed through the strait between Trinidad and Grenada we were challenged by the French submarine guarding the strait. This was not a new experience. Later I learned that this same sub was sunk by an armed Allied merchantman who was unable to make out the colors on the conning tower. The French submarine did have the bad habit of surfacing quite unexpectedly dead ahead of an approaching vessel.

The news that we were going into Caripito caused a rumble through the crew. Caripito was a crude oil dock some eight hours sail up the San Juan River out of the Gulf of Paria. Here there was no shore leave, no town, nothing but a loading dock surrounded by jungle. I had been here several times.

As we entered the Gulf of Paria and anchored to pick up our river pilot, the

(continued next page)

## A VOYAGE TO FREETOWN

From Page 3

rumblings among the crew grew louder and the words "sit-down-strike" and "war bonus" were heard. To tie up the loading facility at Caripito seemed good strategy as only one ship at a time could be serviced here.

But that is another story - for another issue. (Mac. W0AP, 1001-P)

--- O ---

### WELCOME - NEW MEMBERS

A warm "Welcome Aboard" to the following who have joined SOWP since our last issue.

(Add to Section I of your 1998 Wireless Register).

**CROSSLAND**, Ross S. 5626-M Ross/Joan W5NV 512 263-2587 5410 Carbine Circle, Austin, TX 78736-1555 rossgolf@flash.net 1969 05B4S Army

**MERTENS**, Larry A. 5627-TA ...../..... N6LM 916 383-8648 7904 La Raviera Drive 309, Sacramento, CA 95826

**ZIEGLER**, Charles G. 5628-SGP Chas/..... WD4ITR 491 758-3776 3719 35th Street West, Bradenton, FL 34205-1803 first assignment USS Columbine 1919

**PARRY**, Stephen J. 5629-TA ...../..... G4LJZ 9 Hillside Close Wells, Somerset England BA5 2NA

**JAWORSKI**, Thomas P. 5630-M Tom-TT/Marilyn WA1MJE 413 528-9002 101 Cottage Street, Great Barrington, MA 01230 Gridsq@aol.com 1963 NQC/NUD

**DUNN**, Douglas R. 5631-M Doug/Peggy K7YD 406 222-6292 11 River

Run Road, Livingston, MT 59047 doug@wtp.net first assignment NPD Seattle, RM2 in USNR 1965-68, corsrated to CTR/M2 to USN Commsta Philippines 69-71

**ALGRANT**, James J. 5632-V ...../Patricia 207 236-7714 P.O. Box 1047, Camden, ME 04843 pajim@ime.net first ship SS African 1944 3rd Radio Officer

**ESTRADA**, Frank 5633-M Frank/Zohira 972 662-7260 3621 Frankford Road Apt. 134, Dallas TX 75287 festrada@prodigy.net CW radio operator 1971-75 Ojus Radio WAX

**CORRECTION**: Please correct member number listed in the June 1999 issue of the Beacon for **SUPIK**, Edward A. to read 2625-TA

--- O ---

## THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY'S COLUMN

Walt Boyd, SOWP 2958-P, K6DZY.

Among the most disturbing SOWP chores to which I must attend is closing the door to a member's next Beacon. A December 1998 Beacon was returned in this morning's mail with a post office notation that the addressee had closed out his p.o. box and left no forwarding address. I checked the Ham Callsign (Buckmaster) page on the Web, but his address there was the same as the one the returned Beacon carried. With reluctance I inserted the "!" (address unknown) in the top line of the database record -this sign directs the computer labeler to skip this record in the future. Where might our member have gone, including the possibility of flight to our Chapter Eternal? Perhaps a "clearing house" in our new web page could help this recurring problem, but less than a third of our members are "on the Internet" as yet.

(continued next page)



Communicated by  
Wireless - Amateur,  
Commercial or  
Military 40 years ago?  
Licensed ham today?

JOIN  
OLD OLD TIMERS CLUB  
3191 DARVANY DR  
DALLAS TX 75220-1611  
Phone: 214-352-4743  
E-MAIL OOTC@JUNO.COM



Licensed Amateur at least  
25 years ago?  
And licensed now?  
Then you should belong to the  
Quarter Century Wireless  
Association  
For information write:  
159 E. 16th Ave  
Eugene, OR 97401-4017

## THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY'S COLUMN

From Page 5

Web page? SOWP has established a direct presence on the Internet. Although we sincerely thank Joe Gardner, K7CI, for his past and transitional carry of our SOWP information on his web pages, it is time we carry our own weight. If you have a modem-equipped PC, from now on use this URL plus its links: <http://www.sowp.org> --note that last part, ".org". We become so accustomed to ".com" that it's easy to insert it into our web address, but it will not work there --someone has already acquired ".com" and for us it's a "wrong address."

If you have ideas as to what we should have on our web pages, do send them in by either snail- or e-mail. Some possibilities are: a "rag-chew" page, a related sale or swap page, and a protected address page. This latter would be available only to bone fide SOWP members and entry protected by password. Among items appropriate to discussion in the rag-chew pages might be personal experiences in youth and one's first pro assignment. I'd welcome hearing from anyone who has signed on to the DirecPC service, for instance.

As mentioned by Earl, our new editor, we are projecting return to regular Beacon publishing schedule by December's end. Do think seriously about writing your "story" for a future Beacon. You don't have to be a wordsmith -- just tell it like it was in your own words. Your editors will touch it up if needed without changing any facts or altering your writing style. It's a "gift" that editors have. We know that not everyone can write a "million-dollar book," anymore than yours truly, for instance, can fly an airplane. (I definitely cannot!). Write it - while the

thought is hot. Send it to either Earl or myself (addresses in the masthead).

And please do check your Beacon expiration date: the last few characters on your label membership-line. They might read 12/98 or DEC/98; both mean the same, that your dues expire on the last day of December of the year indicated. And we are not worried about using a two-numeral year designation... Y2K is applicable to a computer's BIOS (its operating system), not the content of members' labels! Your dues make The Beacon possible. They're the Society's life-line!

--Walt Boyd, K6DZY.

--- O ---

### Goldwater Ham Station To Become Museum Exhibit

(from the American Radio Relay League bulletin of August 6, 1999)

The well-known ham station of the late Sen Barry Goldwater, (SOWP 0800-HN)K7UGA, is being donated to the Arizona Historical Society for display as a museum exhibit. The Society plans to set up the massive station console and equipment "as the late Senator used it," said Reba Wells Grandrud, director of the Society's Central Arizona Division.

Current plans call for the K7UGA station equipment and console to be moved from the Goldwater home in Paradise Valley, Arizona, and reassembled at the Society's museum in Tempe sometime during the next year. Details are still being worked out.

"We're just delighted," Grandrud said. "We felt it was very appropriate to have this here."

Goldwater's station and massive antenna system were used to complete thousands of phone patch messages for troops during the Vietnam War. The

antennas have been dismantled and sold, and will not be a part of the museum exhibit.

The museum intends to display the station intact and hopes to recreate the look and feel of the original Goldwater ham shack through the use of digital photographic techniques. While it's unlikely the station itself would be operational, she said the museum might "simulate" an operating setup for the sake of visitors.

Goldwater died May 29, 1998. Grandrud said she approached Goldwater's widow, Susan, about having the museum--a state agency--acquire the K7UGA station for display.

Grandrud could not say if the exhibit would be a permanent one but said Goldwater's station would be maintained as part of the museum's collection.

--- O ---

### Corrections/Additions to THE WIRELESS REGISTER - 1998

Changes are given on a page-by-page basis so they can be marked into your personal copy.

page 12 - change address, FAHEY, Wilbur J.C. 1478-P, 801 969-8246, 2011 West 4700 South Apt. G259, Taylorsville, UT 84118

page 14 - change address, GATES, Anthony M. 0485-V 202 479-4005, 510 N St. SW N-232, Washington, DC 20024-4509

page 15 - change address, GUSTAFSSON, Ms. Birgitta 3854-M, Byjordsgatan 36, SE-731 33 Koping, SWEDEN

page 22 - revise following, METCALFE, William, 2313-M Bill/Fran VE6BF & VE6FOC, 780 929-6543

(continued page 10)



## AN OT'S STORY

**J. Harold "Gib" Gibson**  
**SOWP 3977-P, W9PQO**

interviewed by  
 Fred W. Field

SOWP 3875-V, K6IHY

I was born January 3, 1916 in Chicago, IL. My father was James Leroy Gibson. He was an early ham who had a kilowatt spark station, 9JL operating in 1910, before amateurs were formally licensed. Although he shut the station down before I was born, I had an early awareness of his prior ham activity because of the big multi-wire antenna (end-fed flattop with spreaders) which was still prominently towering over our house. We lived at 5626 Ridge Ave. in the section on north side Chicago called Edgewater. In 1924 we moved from that house to 110 W. Kenilworth Ave., Villa Park, IL.



"Gib" Gibson operating W8UOR at Coldwater, MI in December 1941. Home-made rig is crystal controlled on 7200 kc with a 35T final. Antenna is a 40 meter dipole up about 25 ft. Receiver is Hallicrafters Super Defiant SX-25.

I first got personally involved in radio in 1926 at the age of 10. Like a lot of other kids in that time, I set out to make a crystal set. When my father learned of my interest, he took me down in the basement where he had his old radio gear stored. There he dug out a variometer. This was a well-built one with the internal rotating coil wound on a bakelite ball. He also fixed me up with a silicon detector. This was probably when the bug bit. For the first time I paid real attention to his fascinating old gear - I especially remember the big antenna coil which was pancake-wound and had movable taps.

I had a lot of fun with the crystal set. At that time in the Chicago area we had broadcast stations WBBM, WGN, WJAZ, WLS, WMAQ, WTAM and KYW.

I got a lot of early inspiration from Frank Roman, W9GS, a nearby ham who then lived in Elmhurst, IL. He had a pretty elaborate phone rig which used

a pair of 852 triodes modulated with another pair of 852s. High voltage dc came from a motor generator. He had a commercial receiver, a Pilot Super Wasp. This was the first time I participated in operating a station.

Later I started experimenting with tube circuits. My first serious receiver was the customary homemade regenerative detector with one stage of transformer coupled audio. Both tubes were type 199. The plate current for the audio amplifier ran right through the headphones. About 1930 I built my first transmitter. This was a TNT circuit using a single type 71A with about 135 volts on the plate. My antenna was an off-center fed hertz which was clipped onto the tank coil through a capacitor. During this time I got a lot of help and inspiration from Malcolm H. Romberg, W9BE. He died about 1950. Like most youngsters starting out in those days I

(continued next page)



Gib, W9PQO

So. Bend, IN, 1970

## AN OT'S STORY

From Page 7

couldn't resist the temptation to get in the air. I went on 80 meters to work another unlicensed teenager, Tohle S. Kane.

I finally took the FCC test in 1933 at age 17. Three months later, my ticket arrived and I was legally on the air with the W9PQO call. Tohle Kane took the test the same day I did, but flunked the written part. He eventually did get licensed about 1934 or 1935 with the call, W9RNB. He didn't stay active and this call was eventually reassigned. Tohle had a career in aviation and became a pilot for United Airlines. In his later years he moved to Oregon, got active again and about 1959 became K7TAW. Tohle was listed as a silent key in the 1996 callbook.

In 1934 the country was facing some hard times with no jobs available anywhere. That year, at the age of 18, I joined up for a 2-year hitch with the Civilian Conservation Corps (the CCCs). I was sent to St. Louis, MO where I operated Army station WVV at Jefferson Barracks. Later I operated CCC headquarters station WUGJ at Decatur, Il. While in St. Louis I passed the tests for my commercial tickets. To my great surprise and joy, the inspector told me that passing the commercial test entitled me to an automatic upgrade to Class A on my ham license.

In 1936, with my CCC service concluded, I returned to Chicago where Mal Romberg helped me get my first radio job doing transmitter watch at WBBM.

In 1937 I went to work for the Michigan Associated Telephone Company and moved to Coldwater, MI. There I was the southern stock keeper and also worked on the carrier equipment. In those days you were lucky to have a job and I was glad to do

anything that needed to be done.

As a result of the move to Michigan my ham call got changed to W8UOR. In Coldwater I made friends with Carroll Kenyon, W8DUH. He was in QSO with Hawaii on Dec. 7, 1941 and called to tell me about the Japanese attack. The last station I worked pre-war was W8EW in Grand Rapids on 7200 Kc.

I met my wife, Donna Mead on a blind date Sept. 1936 in Quincy, MI. We were married Jan. 31, 1938. She died April 11, 1981. She was a great lady! We had a son born April 26, 1940 who died as a baby and is buried in South Haven, MI. Our daughter, Donna was born Feb. 9, 1942.

In 1937 I had joined the Naval Reserve. In 1942 the Navy activated me and I was sent to Oak Ridge, TN. There I did technical work for Professor Frederick E. Terman, who was on leave from Stanford University where he was well-known for his radio engineering textbooks and handbooks.

In 1945, with the war over, I got my discharge. Soon after I was employed by Indiana-Michigan Electric Co. in South Bend, IN as a carrier current engineer. Later I was made head of the communications department and eventually became supervising engineer.

The move to South Bend put me back in the 9th District, and I was able to get back my old call, W9PQO.

In 1949 I met Wes Schaum, W9DYV. He was one of the early proponents of amateur SSB and founded Central Electronics in Chicago, an early manufacturer of specialized SSB equipment. I got intensely interested in this new technology and soon had an SSB rig of my own on the air. In 1952 I was on a list of 200 hams active on SSB.

One of my vivid ham radio memories

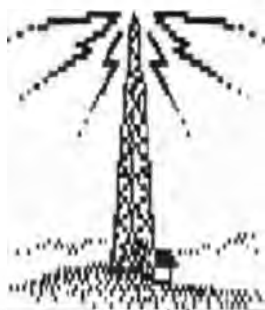
in South Bend was the day I talked to Air Force Gen. Curtis Lemay, W6EZV, while he was flying over our city. I knew of his interest in SSB and when I asked him a technical question, he handed the mike over to Art Collins, W0CXX who was in the cockpit right next to him. Art and Wes Schaum were pioneers in bringing SSB into ham radio. Art was a firm believer in the filter method of SSB generation, while Wes favored the phasing method. We early SSB enthusiasts enjoyed listening to the many heated discussions they had on the air.

I retired from Indiana-Michigan Electric on Jan. 1, 1981. My wife, Donna died soon after. Then in 1984 I went to live with my daughter in Minneapolis/St. Paul. After 6 years there we moved to Springfield, MO for one year.

In my years as a widower I developed a close and lasting friendship with Nellie Yoder of South Bend. Nellie's son, Ron (now deceased) was K9TXF. Through our relationship, Nellie became seriously interested in ham radio herself and became N9KAP. She is an avid CW operator and we stay in touch on 20 meters while I am staying with my daughter Donna Parrish, KA9SZU in California from November through April. There I work 80, 40 and 20 meters CW using an Icom 751 and a 102-ft. G5RV nailed up under the eaves. I also have a backup Kenwood TS-930 and a Heath SB-200 power amp, if needed. Most of the time I run about 50 watts, usually on 14,060 kc.

I'd like to hear from any old friends that I have lost touch with over the years. My winter address is: c/o Donna Parrish, 27000 Abbey Glen Dr., Yorba Linda, CA 92887 or from mid. Apr. to mid. Nov.: c/o Nellie Yoder, N9KAP, 303 E. Chippewa, South Bend, IN 46614





## Announcing - the Annual SOWP International QSO Roundup

December 9 - 11, 1999



The Annual SOWP International CW Roundup has become an event of great popularity among our members, providing a reunion among ourselves near the Holiday Season. In addition, the affair has proven to be an excellent public relations exercise, extending worldwide.

**DATE/TIME:** The Roundup will begin at 1901 Eastern Standard Time, Thursday, December 9, 1999 (0001 UTC December 10) and will end 51 hours later at 2200 EST, Saturday, December 11, 1999, (0300 UTC Sunday, December 12). This time period accommodates members who are unable to participate on weekdays (Wed., Thur., Friday only) including our overseas members. No participant should feel compelled to operate for a period longer or shorter than he or she wishes.

**FREQUENCIES:** Five amateur bands, 3.5 MHz; 7 MHz; 14 MHz; 21 MHz; and 28 MHz will be used. A ten (10) kHz portion is allocated at 50 to 60 KHz up from the low end of the bands. Example: 7,050 KHz to 7,060 KHz. **Note:** Listen for "DX" stations +/- 5 KHz above and/or below these segments.

**MESSAGE EXCHANGE:** Message content shall be as follows:

NR. Your SOWP membership number without suffix: (M, V, P, SGP, etc.)

Your First name or Nickname

Location: Your State, Province or Country

EXAMPLE: NR 783 W4HU John VA (Sent)

NR 2581 W4ZC Jack MD (Rec'd)

**NOTE: NO CONTACT or QSO NUMBERS SHOULD BE SENT.**

**SCORING:** Each completed exchange with another SOWP member will count ONE (1) POINT. However, if you contact the same station on three (3) or more bands, add three (3) points to your overall total point score for each station so contacted. We encourage greater use of 3.5 MHz and 7 MHz. Look for contacts on those bands during the first 15 minutes of each hour during band openings.

**LOGS:** Please make up your own log sheets. Include columns for:

1. Band Used. 2. Date/time of QSO. 3. SOWP Nr. received. 4. Call of Station Worked. 5. Operator's name. 6. Name of State, Province or Country.

The heading of your log sheet should show your own call sign and the text of the message you transmitted for each exchange. For example - ( NR 881 W8TP Ted OH). Your completed log sheets should be forwarded to our Vice President for Awards, John H. Swafford, W4HU, 2025 N. Kensington St., Arlington, VA 22205 USA by January 15, 2000.

**AWARDS:** Certificates will be presented to the top seven scorers indicating their positions. Certificates of Participation will be sent to all who submit logs showing five (5) or more contacts.

**WE HOPE MANY, MANY SOWP MEMBERS WITH AMATEUR STATIONS WILL PARTICIPATE IN THE SPIRIT OF FELLOWSHIP IN THIS GET TOGETHER EVENT.** We encourage extended exchanges between members, rather than mere "contesting".

- 73 and good luck-

Your 1999 SOWP ROUNDUP COMMITTEE:

John Swafford, 783-V, W4HU, Chairman; Jack Kelleher, 2581-P, W4ZC, President, SOWP; Ted Phelps, 881-P, W8TP

**Corrections/Additions to THE WIRELESS REGISTER - 1998**

From Page 6

page 24 - change address, NORWOOD, Charles A. 1480-V, P.O. Box 17236, Winston Salem NC 27116-7236

page 48 - Antone, Carl F. 4362-V W6OZA w6oza@aol.com

page 49 - Flook, Kenneth G. 1664-P kgfwasobsectr@juno.com

page 50 - Metcalfe, William 2313-M wmetcalf@planet.con.net

---- O ----

**Fort Huachuca**

by

John James Murray

SOWP 5016-P, KB7LOH

Greetings from Arizona's Hi Desert:

Fort Huachuca was founded in 1877, site picked by a Captain Whitside high in the foothills of the Huachuca mountains because of abundant water supply and timber. Sole purpose of the Fort, originally Camp Huachuca, was to drive the Chiricahua Apache off their lands. Original camp was run by white brass in charge of Negro troopers and non-coms. Starting pay was \$13 a month and a miserable existence. Desertion was not uncommon. The extensive use of the Heliograph keeping track of Indian movement was a prime factor in their defeat and being sent to the Florida swampland by a Col. Nelson Miles.

During WW2 the Post was a staging area for Negro WAC. After the War the Post closed down for a few years but reopened when it was discovered a prime location for an electronics proving ground.

Currently it is a huge communications/electronics complex, home of the 11th

Signal Brigade and home of the Army's Intelligence Center & School.

If I could go back 25 years, I would apply as code instructor because the Post has continued to teach Morse, but retirement life is much easier than getting up and going to work each morning.

I didn't know Sergeant Hill (received Fort Huachuca's Distinguished Instructor of the Year for 1998) was the Morse instructor until I read the article in the Huachuca Scout, the Post weekly paper. I contacted the writer who also happens to be one of the honchos for the Scout and he gave me permission to sent it to SOWP for publication after I explained my own background and the interest it would impart to old time members of SOWP.

Often run across old Army men who were stationed here or back at Monmouth, Detrick and Devens. By the way, Detrick has closed down and the majority of their people were transferred out here.

I've been living in southern Oregon for 15 years following retirement from the U.S. Coast Guard - getting sicker and sicker of state politics, politicians and a fun and games educational system. Heard about this then relatively remote Post in SE Arizona, 70 miles SE of Tucson and up 4,700'. I drove down 1,230 miles out of our way to check it out back in '72. Liked it immediately. Pristine air, fabulous year round climate. After a nice 2-months vacation back east (Buffalo), returned home but fully intending to move. We did the following year.

Unfortunately, the developers and money grubbers have found this place and are ruining it, just as they did Oregon back in the '60s. Sometimes I wonder if our "democratic" way of life, i.e. dog eat dog, is the best way to go.

Okay, Earl - hope the above answers your questions. If not ask again and I'll answer if I can.

After I retired from the USCG in '58, I stayed away from any aspect of radio and CW for 35 years - had had enough CW on too many ships for too many years but here, an old timer hounded me for a year to get a ticket and wore me down. He was W4MX (Slim) now a silent key. I miss him greatly.

73

---- O ----

**Member Correspondence**

Dear Waldo:

... On the TV news last week saw the part where they closed KSF. On my first ship, CTS California State WTDQ I received my first message from KSF and did not make a mistake. That was January 14, 1941.

I enjoy every part of every copy and don't want to miss any.

Thank you and keep up the good work.

73

Carl F. Antone SOWP 4362-V, W6OZA

---- O ----

**DUES NOTICE**

It's considerably past renewal of dues time for members whose labels read DEC/98 or 12/98. Those members will miss the December 1999 issue of the Beacon unless dues are paid. Those labels reading DEC/99 (12/99) will need to renew by January 2000 or February at latest. Dues are \$15 per year, or 3 years for \$40, payable to the Secretary at POBox 86 Geyserville CA 95441.

## NPL History Author Seeks Help

by

Fred W. Field

SOWP 3875-V, K6IHY

The author has an extensive article in preparation about NPL, San Diego, CA. The historical high-power station was put into service in 1917 and was dismantled in 1995. Fred has collected much information about the design, erection and beginning years - and has photos and newspaper articles about the takedown. He has tried in vain to reach a "Base Historian" at USN San Diego in order to gather some milestones about the various operational phases during the station's long service. Can any retired Navy member near the base help him establish the contact?

Fred would also like to include recollections of former radio operators who remember NPL.

Contact: Fred W. Field, K6IHY 1516 Avenida Selva, Fullerton, CA 92833-1531 714/871-5767

— o —

## Member Correspondence

Greetings OM,

... Sorry to read about the closedown of the Edelweiss Chapter.

Have to agree whole hartedly with Bill Eckels. He's so right about a conscientious CW Op outweighing the technical gadgets - as he puts it. Hope some of us old timers are around long enough to see ship owners eat crow.

73

I.J. Murray

SOWP 5016-P, KB7LOH

## SILENT KEYS

With Deep Regret, we report the passing of the following SOWP members as they join our Chapter Eternal. We send our sincere sympathies to those they held dear.

**BLASSER**, Marvin R. 4403-V, W5NFZ, Dallas, TX. No date or details. Reported in QST, August 1999.

**BUSHELL**, C. William 2149-V, VE3DXY, Kingston, Ont. Canada. No date or details. Reported in QCWA Journal, Summer 1999.

**GUNTHER**, Frank A. 3957-SGP, W2ALS, Staten Island, NY. May 24, 1999. No details. Reported in Spark Gap Times, July 1999.

**MacLAREN**, Harry A., Sr. 1111-SGP, W5FGO, Gretna, LA. No date or details. Reported in QST, August 1999.

**MYHRE**, Robert 4794-P, AD4XC, Crossville, TN. March 4, 1999. No details. Reported by Dan Courtney 1156-P

**OKU**, George I. 1272-P, W6GRF, Modesto, CA. No date or details. Reported Buckmaster Publishing at URL: [www.buck.com](http://www.buck.com)

**OSBORNE**, David B. 5228-TA, WB6LNL, La. Mesa, CA. No date or details. Reported in QST, July 1999.

**SACKS**, Clayton H. 4242-P, W1YB, Nobleboro, ME. No date or details. Reported in QST, August 1999.

**VARGAS**, John F. 2801-V, W2ULO, Raleigh, NC. No date or details. Reported in QST, August 1999.

**WALLACE**, Leona 5472-TA, WA6OHB, Las Vegas, NV, Aug. 11, 1999 age 84. No details. Reported by Bob Hickman via Waldo T. Boyd.

**WALTERS**, Arthur R. 3724-V, KB2JTC, Millbrook, NY, Nov. 17, 1998 age 80. Reported by Waldo T.

Boyd. Served with Merchant Marines during World War II.

## Silent Key Reporting

Please send reports to SOWP Exec. Sec'y Waldo T. Boyd, P.O. Box 86, Geyserville, CA 95441-0086. If available, include date, age of deceased and cause of passing.

--- O ---

## Radio Officers Union In Bankruptcy

From the MEBA Telex Times

The Official Union Newsletter for MEBA Marine Officers

from Vol. 6 No. 28, July 16, 1999

The Radio Officers Union (ROU) - formerly District No. 3 of the National Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association - has entered bankruptcy proceedings.

--Court filings by the ROU indicate that the union intends to wind up its affairs and cease operation.

--Representatives of NMEBA are closely monitoring the bankruptcy proceedings to insure that the interests of the NMEBA and the District No. 1 - PCD, MEBA Plans are protected.

--The ROU ceased to be District No. 3 of the NMEBA in December 1998 when it notified the NMEBA President that it was exercising its unconditional right to withdraw from the organization.



**COPY BY**

**Ben Russell SOWP 1853-V, N6SL**

Ted & Earl, Copied flg on 4310 KHz:

CQ DE WCC/WNU QSS QSW 4310  
6376 12826.5 16972 17117.6 khz =

CQ CQ DE WCC WCC = 12/2340  
UTC JUL 99 =

IN 1901, CALL SIGN WCC WAS ASSIGNED TO THE SOUTH WELLFLEET MASSACHUSETTS WIRELESS TELEGRAPH FACILITY OPERATED BY GUGLIELMO MARCONI. MORSE CODE SIGNALS FROM WCC HAVE BEEN HEARD AROUND THE WORLD EVER SINCE. TODAY WE RETIRE WCC FROM WIRELESS TELEGRAPH OPE-

RATIONS. WCC WILL CONTINUE TO SERVE THE MARITIME COMMUNITY IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE GLOBAL RADIO NETWORK OPERATED BY GLOBE WIRELESS. DE WCC VA

VVV DE WNU

CQ CQ CQ DE WNU WNU 12/2347  
UTC JUL99

PEARL RIVER RADIO/WNU NOW CEASES RADIOTELEGRAPH SERVICE AFTER EIGHTY-SEVEN YEARS OF CONTINUOUS OPERATION. WE WILL CONTINUE TO SERVE THE MARINER THROUGH OUR ELECTRONIC MAIL SERVICE AS PART OF THE GLOBE WIRELESS NETWORK.

AR 73 DE WNU WNU WNU CL

VVV DE KPH KPH KPH=

CQ CQ CQ DE KPH KPH KPH =

WE NOW CLOSE THE RADIOTELEGRAPH OPERATION OF STATION KPH. SINCE 1904, STATION KPH HAS DISTINGUISHED ITSELF AS ONE OF THE MOST WELL KNOWN AND RESPECTED CALL SIGNS IN THE WORLD, AND WILL CONTINUE TO DO SO AS PART OF THE GLOBAL RADIO NETWORK OF HF STATIONS =

NW CL DE KPH SK

-----Ted: I had to start the 40m net and did not copy the final KFS msg pls qsp. tks

++++ SOCIETY OF WIRELESS PIONEERS, Inc., a Non-Profit (IRS 501(c)(3)) Corporation chartered in California - FOUNDED 1968 +++++ William A. Breniman - Founder and President Emeritus - **CORRESPONDENCE: SOWP Headquarters** - Send letters re Dues, Change of Address and all membership correspondence to: Exec. Sec. Waldo T. Boyd (K6DZY) P.O. Box 86, Geyserville, CA 95441. [Tel: 707-857-3434][email: k6dzy@netdex.com] Dues are \$15 U.S. per Calendar Year or 3 Years - \$40 and must be paid to subscribe to this newsletter. Orders for **SOWP emblems, stationery & SLOP CHEST** items to: Roy I. Couzin, (W6JET) 151 Waner Way, Felton, CA 95018 [TEL: 408-335-7874] [email: rcouzin@aol.com] Please enclose SASE. **SOWP QSL CARDS** may be ordered from **RUSPRINT**, 12730 State Line Rd., Leawood, KS 66209 [Tel: 1-800-962-5783.] **EDITORIAL OFFICE:** The World Wireless Beacon is published by The Society of Wireless Pioneers, Inc., 5319 Sierra Vista Rd., Murphys, CA USA 95247. [Tel: 209-728-8316][email: earlw@goldrush.com] Editor & Publisher, Earl D. Wilson, Jr. (K6GPB). Send comments, letters and editorial contributions, (with SASE) to the Editor. ORIGINAL MATERIAL IN THIS PUBLICATION MAY BE QUOTED IF CREDIT IS GIVEN.

Society of Wireless Pioneers, Inc.,  
P.O. Box 86 Geyserville, CA., USA 95441 - 0086

\*ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED\*

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
REYNOLDSBURG, OH  
PERMIT No. 81

TIME VALUED MATERIAL  
PLEASE DELIVER  
PROMPTLY